

Message Text

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PAGE 01 GEORGE 02381 291158Z
ACTION ARA-10

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C O N F I D E N T I A L GEORGETOWN 2381

LIMDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PDIP, GY
SUBJECT: PRIME MINISTER FORBES BURNHAM'S REQUEST FOR AN APPOINTMENT
WITH PRESIDENT CARTER

REF: GEORGETOWN 2342

1. FOREIGN MINISTER FREDRICK WILLS TOOK THE OCCASION OF MY INITIAL COURTESY CALL ON SEPT. 28 TO PRESS FOR FAVORABLE CONSIDERATION OF PRIME MINISTER BURNHAM'S REQUEST FOR AN APPOINTMENT WITH PRESIDENT CARTER DURING EITHER OF THE TIME PERIODS PREVIOUSLY INDICATED (PRIOR TO OCT. 25 OR AFTER OCT. 30).

2. WILLS STATED THAT BURNHAM WAS BEING PRESSED BY THE SOVIETS TO SET DATE IN RESPONSE TO THEIR OUTSTANDING INVITATION THAT HE VISIT MOSCOW. BURNHAM, HOWEVER, IS DELAYING HIS RESPONSE TO THE SOVIETS AGAINST THE HOPE THAT PRESIDENT CARTER MAY BE ABLE TO SEE HIM. (IN RAISING SOVIET INVITATION THERE WAS NO IMPLICATION ON WILLS' PART OF USING IT AS "LEVERAGE." RATHER HE SEEMED ALMOST PATHETICALLY EAGER THAT THE USG GIVE BURNHAM AND THE GOG CREDIBLE GROUNDS FOR CONTINUING TO DEFER ON THE
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SOVIET REQUEST.)

3. WILLS REITERATED BURNHAM'S ACUTE DISAPPOINTMENT AT NOT BEING ABLE TO VISIT WASHINGTON FOR THE PANAMA CANAL SIGNING CEREMONY. PRESSURES AT HOME, NOTABLY THE CRITICAL SUGAR STRIKE ENGINEERED BY OPPOSITION LEADER CHEDDI JAGAN HAD PREVENTED HIS ATTENDANCE AND REQUIRED

HIM TO SEND INSTEAD HIS MOST TRUSTED CONFIDANTE IN THE
GOVERNMENT PTOLEMY REID, DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER.

4. COMMENT: BURHAM SEEMS CAUGHT IN A BIND ONLY PARTICALLY
OF HIS OWN DEVISING. HE WOULD LIKE TO PAY A VISIT TO THE
U.S. AT THIS TIME FOR A VARIETY OF REASONS, BUT FEELS
IT WOULD REPRESENT AN UNACCEPTABLE LOSS OF FACE IF HE WERE
UNABLE TO MEET AT LEAST BRIEFLY WITH PRESIDENT CARTER
DURING ITS COURSE. CERTAINLY OUR BEST INTERESTS WOULD BE
SERVED IF SUCH A MEETING COULD BE ARRANGED. ALTHOUGH IT
IS NOT CRITICAL IN TERMS OF THE RELATIOSHIP, THE VISIT HAS
GREAT POLITICAL AND SYMBOLIC IMPORTANCE. IT WOULD DEFINITELY
DRAW A LINE ACROSS THE DIFFICULTIES OF THE PAST IN US-GOG
RELATIONS AND SIGNAL CLEARLY TO RADICALS HERE THAT THE
PRIME MINISTER WANTS GOOD RELATIONS WITH THE US. CONCURRENTLY,
IT WOULD SERVE AS AN ENCOURAGEMENT TO THOSE GUYANESE
WHO HAVE BEEN WORKING TO IMPROVE THE RELATIONSHIP.
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Message Attributes

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